Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph at page 3, lines 1 through 7 with the following amended paragraph:

A typical DSLAM 210 is an ATM (Asynchronous Transmission Mode) MUX (multiplexer) or switch. In a DSLAM system, the subscriber lines may operate various protocols, including PPP over ATM or IP (Internet Protocol) over ATM (RFC 1483), among other existing or developing telecommunication protocols. On the other side of the DSLAM is a communication trunk 215, which typically employs a very high bandwidth communication protocol, such as OC3 or DS3. The trunk is coupled to an ATM network 220 which is further coupled to an ISP (Internet Service Provider) 230.

Please replace the paragraph at page 3, lines 8 through 19 with the following amended paragraph:

Still within the central office 120, other DSLAMs are performing the same functions with other subscribers. Multiple DSLAMs operate within a single central office because each subscriber has a dedicated subscriber line to access the Internet, for example. Because of the multiple DSLAMs, the central office 120 is typically ~~managed~~ equipped with a network management station 240 to collect the statistical data regarding health and status from the DSLAMs. Alternatively, the network management station may be located at a remote location and gather statistical data from the DSLAMs over a network, via standard telephone lines, or through another data transmission system. Further, other network management station/DSLAM hierarchies and configurations (not shown) are within the scope of the present invention. It should be understood that the network management station may be a server or other dedicated computer for managing the DSLAMs and the status information regarding the DSLAMs.

Please replace the paragraph at page 5, lines 1 through 8 with the following amended paragraph:

Each line card includes at least one high-speed communication port ~~that interfaces with a~~ DSL subscriber. In the embodiment depicted in Fig. 3, the line cards employ four ports for high-bandwidth communications. Further, the line cards employ processors 335, which interface with the UART 320 in the system controller through buffers 332, 334 and with the modem chips

providing the high-bandwidth communications. Memory (not shown) is used by the processor 335 for storing status information indicating functionality and other aspects of the line cards. The line card processor may also be tasked with managing the half-duplex serial bus protocol.